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UK court formally approves Assange's extradition to US

A London court on Wednesday sent WikiLeaks founder **Julian Assange's** extradition order to UK home secretary Priti Patel to take final call

With this, Assange, wanted in the US over the alleged leak of classified documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has moved one step closer to being extradited to the US

However, if Patel signs off on the order, Assange can appeal in the High Court

Similarly, fugitive Vijay Mallya was cleared for extradition to India in 2019 by the then UK home secretary Sajid Javid. However, he still remains in the UK thanks to purported ongoing "confidential legal process."

UK is reportedly considering giving political asylum to Mallya

Bulldozers pause in riot-hit Jahangirpuri after SC fiat

Court orders status quo; to hear the matter today; concrete and temporary structures razed

Illegal structures being removed in Jahangirpuri on Wednesday | PARVEEN NEGI

PRATHMA SHARMA & ANKITA UPADHYAY @ New Delhi

BULLDOZERS were back in play against alleged rioters, this time in Delhi, till the Supreme Court's status quo order was officially communicated to the North Delhi Municipal Corporation's demolition team in Jahangirpuri around quarter past noon on Wednesday.

'Bulldozer justice' against alleged rioters was first delivered in Madhya Pradesh and replicated in Gujarat before it was initiated in New Delhi.

While the demolition squad with heavy police protection had already begun action in Jahangirpuri, the matter was mentioned by senior advocate Dushyant Dave before a Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana.

"...The drive is unconstitutional. Unauthorised demolition is taking place in Jahangirpuri where riots took place. No notice was served or reply sought," he told the apex court while mentioning a plea filed by Jamiat Ulama-I-Hind.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal mentioned another Jamait plea on the larger issue of demolition of residential or commercial property as a punitive measure in various parts of the country without following due process.

Despite the bench ordering status quo and posting the matter for urgent hearing by a day, the bulldozers went on razing the alleged encroachments.

Dave had to mention the matter again before the bench around noon saying the demolition was on despite its orders, before the court directed communicating the status quo through the secretary-general of the court to the concerned authorities.

It was CPM leader Brinda Karat who rushed to the spot and stood in front of a bulldozer with a hard copy of the Supreme Court order before the drive came to a grinding halt. The clock read close to 12.15 pm. By then the operation had gone on for about two-and-a-half hours. Among other several structures torn down was the gate of a mosque.

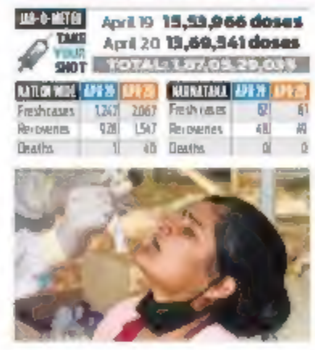
The action drew a wave of condemnation. "At least the Supreme Court and its order should not be bulldozed," Brinda Karat told reporters.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi called it "a demolition of India's constitutional values" while urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to switch off the "bulldozers of hate".

Hyderabad MP and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi tried visiting Jahangirpuri but was stopped by the police. As for the BJP-ruled North Delhi Municipal Corporation, it said the demolition around a 2 km stretch was part of a routine exercise.

'WHY PUNISH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY?'

Shop owners whose buildings were demolished, claimed the NDMC did not give them prior notice. "If you (authorities) want to punish, then punish the accused who have been arrested. Why are you punishing the whole community?," Mohd Rahman, whose shop was razed, said | P9



CM: Panel to look at works of over ₹50 cr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A high-level committee, with a retired high court judge as chairman and technical and financial experts as members, will be appointed within a week to look into sanctioning of works above Rs 50 crore, said Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai here on Wednesday.

The committee, constituted under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act, will be appointed as there were allegations recently that contractors have to give a "commission" to get the works sanctioned. The government has issued the orders for constituting the committee with an aim to stop such illegalities, he added. The committee will operate within a time-frame and look into estimation of projects to detect any padding up of costs, he added.

Bommai said he directed senior officials, including deputy commissioners, not to take up works where only oral orders have been issued, and if such works are taken up, concerned authorities will be held responsible.

On fears of power shortage, he said, "The state has surplus power, but the problem is with improper transmission and distribution in many areas." Around 100 power stations have been sanctioned across the state for proper power distribution by identifying gaps. P4

Santosh suicide: Cops get preliminary autopsy report

Udupi: Nine days after Santosh Patil's alleged suicide at a lodge in Udupi, police received the preliminary postmortem report from the Department of Forensic Medicine, KMC, on Wednesday. P4

POWER SITUATION

Coal in state can last only 2-3 days

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

AS many parts of the country are reeling under power crises, Karnataka too has coal stocks that will last only for the next two to three days. The state has been spared the severity as it was blessed with bountiful showers over the last few days reducing the burden on the grid.

Energy Department officials told TNIE, "Every day, we are getting 15 rakes of coal. But it is better as we used to get 11 rakes earlier. We are hand-to-mouth as far as the coal situation is concerned, but we are in a better position as we have renewable energy and the weather is good. The rains have been a blessing for us."

Power Minister Sunil Kumar said the daily average coal supply is improving, while the average peak demand is 10,400 MW.

"It has been raining over the last few days and the power demand for irrigation pump sets in agricultural fields has come down. This has also brought down power generation at Ballari and Raichur thermal units," the minister added. CONTINUED ON: P5

Power crisis looms as coal stocks dry up

Low imports add to pain

An official said lowering the coal imports in 2021-22 is one of the reasons thermal power plants are facing coal shortage. India imported just 25 million tonnes in FY22, which is just 50% of last year's import

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

INDIA is on the verge of an unprecedented power crisis as thermal power plants across the country are grappling with coal shortages.

According to the Central Electricity Authority of India's latest daily coal report, coal stock at 81 out of a total of 150 thermal power stations using domestic coal is in critical stage. The situation at private thermal plants is equally bad as stock at 28 out of 54 plants is critical.

"Coal inventories in power plants remain tight at nine days' worth of stock as of mid-April and could result in power outages. If coal supplies do not improve, this could become another 'stagflationary shock', said Shalendra Dubey, chairman, All-India Power Engineers Federation. He warned the coal stock is left for just seven days in Uttar Pradesh, eight days in Haryana, and 17 days in Rajasthan, while the norm is to keep 26 days' stock. The situation is not better in Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

As on April 19, 2022, the peak power demand was 1,88,014 MW while the peak-time shortage stood at 4,469 MW. In comparison, peak demand was 2,00,570 MW in July 2021.

On its part, the Centre has dispelled worries of a power crisis with coal minister Prahald Joshi saying 72.5 million tonnes (MT) coal stock is available with CIL, washeries and captive blocks.

However, in private, coal ministry officials admit there is coal shortage across the country and a power crisis can't be ruled out.

Official fails to 'trace' BSY to serve court summons

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

FORMER chief minister BS Yediyurappa's legal challenges are far from over. On Wednesday, the official attached to the Special Court for the trial of cases against MPs and MLAs reported to the court that he could not serve the summons to Yediyurappa, an accused in a land denotification case of 2012.

The official told the court that he visited Yediyurappa's residence on April 8, 13 and 16 and was unable to serve the summons. He was informed that Yediyurappa was busy touring the state. Why the court process server, as the official is called, did not contact Yediyurappa over phone is a mystery.

Yediyurappa has been seeking a hearing in the Supreme Court to stay the summons issued to him by the trial court in the Bellandur denotification case for the last two weeks, but has not succeeded.

Yediyurappa, accused No. 2, was asked by the trial court to appear before it on April 19 in the case filed under Sec 13 (1)(d) (criminal misconduct) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

On Yediyurappa approaching the Supreme Court directly, legal experts said he had gone before the High Court seeking quashing of proceedings in 2019, but it was dismissed in 2020.

S'mogga airport to be named after Yediyurappa

The Shivamogga airport will be named after former CM BS Yediyurappa and it was decided by the cabinet. The decision will be sent to the approval of Union Civil Aviation Ministry, said CM Basavaraj Bommai.

EXPRESS READ

Man watching KGF 2 shot at in Haveri dist

Haveri: A 27-year-old man from Shiggaon was injured after a fellow moviegoer opened fire at him at a theatre during the screening of blockbuster movie KGF-2. The incident was reported on Tuesday night. The man was shot at after he accidently touched the seat in which the shooter was seated.

Her number in toilets, lecturer harassed

Mangaluru: Three staff members of a private college in Bantwal have been arrested for allegedly sticking lewd posters with the phone number and email id of a female lecturer in public toilets. Few more persons allegedly involved in the case are likely to be arrested soon, said the police.

Evidence found in PSI exam scam case

Hubballi: The CID, which is investigating the PSI recruitment entrance test scam, has got evidence that the answer scripts were manipulated in the test that was held on October 3 at Jnana Ganga English Medium School, which was one of the examination centres. P4

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